



STATEMENT ON NATIONAL DRUG INTELLIGENCE CENTER

Mr. SANTORUM. Mr. President, I rise today to offer my support for Department of Defense funding for the National Drug Intelligence Center in Johnstown, Pennsylvania.

The National Drug Intelligence Center (NDIC), established in 1993, is a component of the U.S. Department of Justice and a member of the Intelligence Community. The General Counterdrug Intelligence Plan, implemented in February 2000, designated NDIC as the nation's principal center for strategic domestic counterdrug intelligence. NDIC's mission is to provide strategic drug-related intelligence and assistance to the drug control, public health, and national security authorities of the United States in order to reduce the adverse impact of drug trafficking, drug abuse, and related harms in this country.

Since September 11, 2001, we have become gravely aware of the importance of intelligence to all aspects of our national defense. This lesson is certainly applicable when assessing the resources generated by drug trafficking among terrorist groups and their sympathizers. I have been told that, since January 2005, NDIC has provided support to the Department of Treasury's Office of Terrorism and Financial Intelligence to produce the nation's first National Money Laundering Threat Assessment. For this effort, NDIC received a letter of commendation from the Treasury Department for its "extraordinary contribution" to this effort. This is but one example of the fine work that is provided by those who serve this country at NDIC. The Center is also actively contributing to the Department of Homeland Security's Office of Counter Narcotics Enforcement on an ongoing drug/terror nexus project. Further, NDIC personnel support the Drug Enforcement Administration's Special Operations Division which targets the convergence of terrorism and traditional drug trafficking networks. These contributions go along with the Center's Document Exploitation Division which, I am told, is second to none in extracting useful information from lawfully-seized evidence.

NDIC is providing a valuable service to this country. It is the only agency with the independence to provide the National Drug Threat Assessment while still maintaining the versatility to assist in the ongoing operations and assessments conducted by the organizations that I have mentioned. The people of Johnstown who staff this facility are of the highest professional capabilities. It is important that we maintain these capabilities as we fight the war on Islamic Fascism on many different fronts.

The House Defense Appropriations bill provides \$39 million for the Center. I look forward to working with the Chairman and Ranking Member to ensure that this funding is included in the final Conference Report with the House. I firmly believe that the National Drug Intelligence Center is an important instrument in providing for our nation's security. I believe that the Administration should include it in its budget in future fiscal years. I will be writing President Bush in the coming days to make this case. At a time when the nexus between drug traffic and terrorist groups is becoming more acute, we need to make funding for our intelligence capabilities one of our highest priorities.